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O R 171150 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8795

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

CINCPAC

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

USDEL FRANCE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

COMUSMACV

CDRUSSAG NKP RTAFB

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 SAIGON 4389

E. O. 11652 GDS

TAGS PINT PINS MILI VS

SUBJECT CEASEFIRE SITUATION REPORT MARCH 17

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

THIS REPORT SUMMARIZES ALL PERTINENT INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO
THE EMBASSY AS OF 2000 MARCH 17

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I ICCS: CANADIAN EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER SHARP
VISITS CANDEL TO ASSESS FUTURE PARTICIPATION

II FPJMC: PRG GENERAL TRAN VAN TRA HOLDS PRESS
CONFERENCE; DRV CONTINUES TO REDEPLOY BACK TO HANOI
III GVN/ PRG BILATERAL TALKS: GVN THREATENS DEADLOCK
BECAUSE OF COMMUNIST VIOLATIONS
IV CEASFIRE VIOLATIONS: TOTAL NOW STANDS AT 7299
V DRV/ PRG PROPAGANDA: HANOI CHARGES VIOLATION IN ROKFV
NOT WITHDRAWING EQUIPMENT WITH PERSONNEL
VI MR 1: QUANG TRI PROVINCE GOVERNMENT BEGINS MOVE
BACK ; REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT INITIATED IN HAI LANG, QUANG TRI
VII MR 2: ENEMY BUILD- UP NOTED IN HIGHLANDS
VIII MR 3: BINH DUONG SCENE OF INCREASED COMMUNIST ATTACKS

IX MR 4: COMBAT CONTINUES AT RELATIVELY HIGH LEVEL;
VILLAGE COUNCIL ELECTIONS BEING SCHEDULED

PART I: ICCS

1. CANADIAN MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MITCHELL SHARP LEFT
SOUTH VIET- NAM THIS AFTERNOON FOLLOWING A TWO- DAY VISIT THAT
INCLUDED MEETINGS WITH PRESIDENT THIEU AND PRIMIN KHIEM. HIS
DEPARTURE PRESS CONFERENCE STATEMENT WAS BRIEF AND NON- COMMITTAL,
AND TO THE EFFECT THAT HE HAD BEEN EXPOSED TO " THE REAL
SITUATION IN THIS COUNTRY". HE AVOIDED ANY DIRECT ANSWER TO
QUESTIONS REGARDING THE WAY THAT HE WOULD ADVISE HIS GOVERNMENT
CONCERNING THE POST- CEASEFIRE SITUATION IN VIET- NAM, AND
MENTIONED THAT HE NOW HAS AN APPRECIATION FOR THE DIFFICUL-
TIES UNDER WHICH THE ICCS HAS TO OPERATE. HE PRAISED MEMBERS
OF THE CANADIAN DELEGATION FOR THEIR WORK.

2. DIRECTOR OF AMERICAN AFFAIRS AT FOREIGN MINISTRY THINH,
WHO ATTENDED SHARP MEETINGS WITH FOREIGN MINISTER AND PRIMIN
IS OPTIMISTIC THAT CANADA WILL STAY ON WITH ICCS. MEETING
WITH FONMIN WHICH SCHEDULED FOR 45 MINUTES STRETCHED OUT TO
HOUR AND HALF AND THINH HAD IMPRESSION SHARP HAD COME OUT TO
SEE ASIA SPECIFICALLY TO EXPOSE CANADA TO PERSUASION FROM SEA
COUNTRIES TO STAY ON COMMISSION THEREBY MAKING POSITIVE
DECISION ALL THE MORE LIKELY AND DEFENSIBLE IN CANADIAN
INTERNAL POLITICAL AREA. THINH THOUGHT CANADA PARTICULARLY
DID NOT WANT APPEARANCE OF SERVING ON ICCS AT SOLE DESIRE OF
US ; JAPANESE REQUEST TO STAY ON CONVEYED TO SHARP ON HIS PASSAGE
THROUGH TOKYO HAD BEEN PARTICULARLY FORTUITOUS IN THIS REGARD.
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3. US- ARRANGED INITIAL SUPPORT CONTRACTS FOR THE ICCS
EXPIRED MIDNIGHT MAR 16. THE ICCS, THROUGH THE HUNGARIAN
CHAIRMAN OF THEIR ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCE COMMITTEE JANOS
FONYODI, IS NOW NEGOTIATING ITS OWN MAINTENANCE AND SUPPORT
CONTRACTS, AND HAS ARRANGED FOR SERVICES TO BE CONTINUED ON A
PRO RATA BASIS UNTIL THEIR CONTRACTS ARE SIGNED. WE REGARD
THIS TURNOVER AS ANOTHER IMPORTANT STEP TOWARDS THE ICCS
ATTAINING SELF- SUFFICIENCY.

4. A FUNERAL WAS HELD SATURDAY MORNING FOR INDONESIAN MAJOR MOELJONO AT THE US MORTURARY, TAN SON NHUT. ALL DELEGATIONS WERE REPRESENTED.

PART II: FPJMC

1. IN A PRESS CONFERENCE MAR 17, GENERAL TRA OF THE PRG (ENG. HOA OF THE DRV DID NOT SHOW) HELD FORTH AT LENGTH ALONG GENERALLY PREDICTABLE LINES. OF MORE THAN ROUTINE INTEREST WERE HIS STATEMENTS THAT THE PRG WOULD HONOR THE PROGRAM OF PW RELEASE AND ABIDE BY THE PROTOCOLS, AND HIS CHARGE THAT PRESIDENT NIXON' S STATEMENT ON COMMUNIST INFILTRATION INTO SOUTH VIET- NAM IS WITHOUT FOUNDATION (SEE SEPTTEL).

2. A X PLUS 47, THE DRV HAS BEGUN TO PERMANENTLY WITHDRAW ITS PERSONNEL. A TOTAL OF 101 PERUONNEL HAVE RETKRND TO HANOI SINCE FEB 27, WHEN WITHDRAWALS BEGAN. DESPITE TENTATIVE REPORTS, PARTICULARLY FROM MRS 3 AND 4, THAT THE PRG MIGHT DEPLOY ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL IN THE LAST DAYS PRIOR TO X PLUS 60, THERE HAS BEEN NO SIGN OF SUCYGDVELOPMENT SO FAR; THE CURRENT FIGURE STANDS AT 203, LESS THAN 1/4 OF THE AUTHORIZED STRENGTH. US AND RVN REMAIN DEPLOYED AT ALL REGIONAL SUB-REGIONAL SITES.

3. DUE TO SOME PROCUDURAL QUESTIONS INVOLVING BOATS AND FLAGS AT HE RELEASE POINT, ONLY 700 COMMUNIST PWS WERE RELEASED AT QUANG TRI ON MAR 16; THE REMAINING 500, PLUS ANOTHER 700 AIRLIFTED FROM CPWC, WERE TO HAVE BEEN TRUNED OVER MAR 17. DRV/ PRG RELEASED 329 ARVN AT QUANG TRI MAR 16. ALSO ON MAR 16, 500 COMMUNIST PWS WERE TRUNED OVER AT THIEN NGON, TAY NINH; THE MAR 17 SCHEDULE (RELEASE DATE NOT AVAILABLE AS OF 1800) CALLED FOR ANOTHER 500 TO BE RELEASED AT THIEN NGON
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AND 201 AT LOC NINH. DESPITE OCCASIONAL DIFFICULTIES SUCH AS AT QUANG TRI YESTERDAY, THE PW EXCHANGE PROGRAM IS CURRENTLY MOVING REASONABLY WELL.

4. OUR REFERENCE TO ARTICLE 4 IN PARA 3 OF THE MAR 16 SITREP REFERRED TO ARTICLE 4 OF THE PROTOCBL ESTABLISHING THE FRJMC.

PART III : GVN/ PRG BILATERAL TALKS

GVN SPOKESMAN TOLD PRESS MAR 16 THAT BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN GVN AND PRG BEGINNING MAR 19 MIGHT FACE A DEADLOCK IF THE COMMUNISTS CONTINUE THEIR SERIOUS VIOLATIONS OF THE CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT BY INFILTRATING MEN AND WEAPONS FROM NORTH VIETNAM INTO THE SOUTH. HE ADDED THAT GVN WOULD TAKE A FIRM STAND ON THIS SUBJECT AFTER HAVING OBTAINING SOLID EVIDENCE OF THIS INFILTRATION .

PART IV : CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS

THE GVN CHARGED IN THE OFFICIAL VIETNAM PRESS THAT THE COMMUNISTS COMMITTED ANOTHER 175 CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS BETWEEN 0600 AMR 15 AND 1200 MAR 16, BRINGING THE TOTAL TO 7299. TOTAL CASUALTY FIGURES NOW ARE 13, 886 COMMUNISTS KILLED AND 208 CAPTURED, WITH 2704 RVNAF KILLED, 12996 WOUNDED AND 788 MISSING. IN ADDITION 327 CIVILIANS HAVE BEEN KILLED, 949 WOUNDED AND 792 ABDUCTED.

PART V : DRV/ PRG PROPAGANDA

1. HANOI ARMY PAPER " DOCUMENTS" DOREAN WITHDRAWAL VIOLATIONS. ACCORDING TO VIETNAM NEWS AGENCY, THE NVA NEWSPAPER RAN PHOTOS IN ITS MAR 15 EDITION DEPICTING A VIOLATION OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT BY DEPARTING ROK FORCES. THE PHOTOS REPORTEDLY SHOW SOUTH KOREAN TROOPS, WITHOUT WEAPONS, WAITING TO BOARD PLANES IN NHA TRANG. HANOI CLAIMS THAT THIS IS IN VIOLATION OF THE AGREEMENT WHICH STIPULATES THAT THE ALLIES MUST WITHDRAW MILITARY EQUIPMENT, AS WELL AS PERSONNEL, FROM SOUTH VIETNAM. COMMENT: COMMUNIST REQUESTS TO BE ALLOWED TO FILM US WITHDRAWAL OF FORCES WERE NO DOUBT MADE WITH SIMILAR PROPAGANDA ENDS IN MIND. END COMMENT.

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2. VIET CONG RAP US ON INFILTRATION CHARGE. LIBERATION RADIO, IN A MAR 16 BROADCAST, BLASTED WHITE HOUSE AND PENTAGON SOURCES FOR MAKING " SLANDEROUS ALLEGATIONS" CONCERNING CONTINUING NVA INFILTRATION OF SOUTH VIETNAM. THE BROADCAST ALSO CITED A REUTERS REPORT IN WHICH IT SAID THAT PRESIDENT NIXON " MENACINGLY" THREATENED " RATHER GRAVE CONSEQUENCES" IF HANOI CONTINUED ITS INFILTRATION ACTIVITIES. LIBERATION RADIO CONTRASTED WHAT IT CALLED THE COMMUNISTS GOODWILL AND STRICT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT WITH " SYSTEMATIC AND CONFIDENTIAL

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VERY GRAVE VIOLATIONS" OF EVERY MAJOR PROVISION BY THE US AND GVN, CHARGING WASHINGTON' S " SLANDEROUS ACCUSATIONS" WERE AIMED AT COERING UP THESE VIOLATIONS.

PART VI MR 1

1. ARVN INTELLIGENCE REPORTS INCREASED ENEMY ACTIVITY IN THE VICINITY OF THE DONG HA RIVER IN NORTHERN QUANG TRI, INCLUDING THE EMPLACEMENT OF A FLOAT BRIDGE. INCIDENTS IN THE REGION TOTALED 47 OF WHICH 32 WERE ATTACKS BY FIRE (ABF). THERE WERE 1157 ARTILLERY ROUNDS FIRED NORTH OF THE HAI VAN PASS, 1825 SOUTH. THERE WERE NO NAVAL GUNFIRE SUPPORT MISSIONS AND NO AIR SORTIES.

2. POLOFF IN QUANG TIN REPORTS THAT ON MAR 14 PROVINCE CHIEF (PC) ARRANGED ICCS VISIT BY ROAD TO MOUNTAIN DISTRICT TOWNS OF TIEN PHUOC AND HAU DOC. ROUTE WAS LINED WITH VILLAGERS WAVING GVN FLAGS. HUNGARIANS DECLINED TO GO, STATING THEY HAD RECEIVED INSTRUCTIONS NOT TO ACCEPT ANY GVN TRAVEL INVITATIONS APART FROM OFFICIAL INVESTIGATIONS. INITALLY RELUCTANT, THE POLES FINALLY SENT THREE MEMBERS OF THEIR CHU LAI TEAM. POLISH MEMBERS OF THE TAM KY TEAM WHICH HAS RESPONSIBILITY FOR QUANG TIN PROVINCE, DID NOT GO.

3. POLOFF QUANG NGAI REPORTS THAT TWO OF THREE BATTALIONS OF THE 5 TH REG., 2 ND ARVN DIV. WERE WITHDRAWN FROM DUC PHO DISTRICT ON MAR 13 AND RETURNED TO QUANG TIN PROVINCE WHERE ONE WILL BE OPCON TO QUANG TIN. GVN MILITARY OFFICIALS PLACE THE PRESENT STRENGTH OF NVA AND OTHER ENEMY UNITS IN THE SA HUYNH AREA AT 1,700 TROOPS. TOAL FRIENDLY FORCES IN THE AREA, INCLDUING RF AND PF UNITS, NUMBER 1,400 , BUT THE GVN HAS A CONSIDERABLE ADVANTAGE IN FIREPOWER. POLOFF COMMENT:

THE WITHDRAWAL OF ARVN TROOPS FROM DUC PHO WOULD SEEM TO INDICATE THAT GVN MILITARY OFFICIALS NO LONGER REGARD AS SERIOUS OR IMMINENT THE THREAT OF A NEW ENEMY ATTACK ON SA HUYNH. THERE IS CONSIDERABLE EVIDENCE TO INDICATE THAT 2 ND DIV CO BH NHUT HAD INFACIT PLANNED AN ASSUALT ON WEAKENED ENEMY DEFENSES AROUND BA TO, WHICH WOULD HAVE CONSTITUED A MAJOR VIOLATION OF THE CEASEFIRE, BUT THAT THESE PLANS APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN VETOED. END COMMENT.

4. THE NEW QUANG TRI PC, COL VIET, HAS ESTABLISHED A FORWARD
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ELEMENT OF THE PROVINCE GOVERNMENT IN QUANG TRI CITY. WOODEN FRAME BUILDINGS SIMILAR TO THOSE BUILT FRO REFUGEE HOUSING ARE BEING CONTRCUTED AND WILL BE COMPLETED SOON. THE FORWARD ECHELON WILL BE STAFFED BY CIVIL CADRE REPRESENTING EACH MAJOR PROVINCE OFFICE. MAIN ADMINISTRATIVE HEADQUARTERS WILL CONTINUE TO BE LOCATED IN DANANG. CONGEN COMMENT: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS MOVE IS THAT VISIBLE GVN CIVIL PRESENCE IS BEING ESTABLISHED ON THE SOUTHERN BANK OF THE THACH HAN RIVER, IMMEDIATELY ADJACENT TO ICCS AND FPJMC TEAM SITES AND DIRECTLY OPPOSITE THE PRG AREA OF CONTROL. END COMMENT.

5. THE RESETTLEMENT OF HAI LANG DISTRICT, QUANG TRI, BEGAN THE MORNING OF MAR 16 WITH THE MOVEMENTS OF 95 FAMILIES (564 PEOPLE). BOTH VIETNAMESE AND US TELEVISION CORRESPONDENTS WERE PRESENT AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MOVE. CONGEN AREA SPECIALIST PRESENT AT THE MOVE REPORTED THAT SOME RETURNEES WERE OF MIXED FEELINGS, HAPPY TO BE RETURNING TO THEIR HOMES BUT SOMEWHAT FEARFUL OF THE UNKNOWN.

6. AT DINNER MAR 14, LH DEPUTY TA THANH HOI EXPRESSED TO QAUNG NGAI AREA DIRECTOR AND POLOFF HIS OPINION THAT PRESIDENT THIEU WILL NOT WILLINGLY MAKE THOSE CONCESSIONS NECESSARY TO REACH A WORKABLE POLITICAL SETTLEMENT WITH THE NLF AND THAT THE USG WILL HAVE TO BRING PRESSURE TO BEAR ON THIEU IF IT TRULY EXPECTS TO SEE A SETTLEMENT OF THE POLITICAL ISSUES. HOI BELIVES THAT NLF MIGHT BE SATISFIED WITH MINORITY REPRESENTATION IN A NEW NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, BUT WILL CERTAINLY FIND UNACCEPTABLE THIEU' S INSISTENCE UPON HOLDING ELECTIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH PRESENT SVN CONSTITION AND ONLY FOR THE PRESIDENTIAL AND VICE PRESIDENTIAL POSTS.

PART VII: MR 2

1. TUY AN ICCS TEAM HAS SUSPENDED DAILY SIGHSEEING TRIPS IN FAVOR OF EXHAUSTIVE DELIBERATIONS ON HOW TO PROCEED WITH INVESTIGATION OF FOUR INCIDENTS ASSIGNED TO TEAM BY TRUCE REGION 3 HDQS. FOUR INCIDENTS APPARENTLY CHOSEN AT RANDOM FROM LONG LIST OF ALLEGED VC VIOLATIONS SUBMITTED TO REGION 3 HQDS BY TUY AN JMT; THOSE SELECTED SEEM OF MARGINAL SIGNIFICANCE

AND TOOK PLACE SEVERAL WEEKS AGO. SENIOR US MEMBER OF TUY AN
JMT SAID THAT IW WILL BE DIFFICULT, OWING TO DELAY FACTOR, TO
PRODUCE EVIDENCE SUBSTANTIATING ALLEGED VIOLATIONS AND TASK
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MAY BE REGIONAL ICCS PLOY TO REMOVE TUY AN TEAM FROM WHIRL
OF TOURISM. IN ANY CASE, AFTER FIVE DAYS OF DISCUSSION ON
HOW TO BEGIN, TEAM HAS YET TO MOVE INTO ACTION. IN FACT, ON
MAR 17 IT WAS TO MAKE OBSERVATIONS (NOT INVESTIGATION) TRIP
TO AREAS OF RECENT FIGHTING IN HIEU XUONG DISTRICT, ESCORTED
BY PC.

2. PLEIKU PC TOLD SENIOR ARRO REP ON MAR 16 THAT MONTAGNARDS
RECENTLY ESCAPED FROM DUC CO AREA HAVE REPORTED THAT VC/ NVA
FORCES THAT AREA HAVE BEEN REINFORCING BY INCREMENTS OF 100
SOLDIERS PER DAY ARRIVING, BY FOOT AND TRUCK, SINCE MAR 5.
ALSO, COMMUNISTS ARE REPORTEDLY CONSTRUCTING AMMO DUMPS BETWEEN
THANH AN DISTRICT CAPITAL AND DUC CO.

3. ACCORDING TO SOME RETURNEES, PEOPLE IN WESTERN THANH AN DISTRICT
HAVE BEEN DIRECTED BY COMMUNISTS TO RETURN TO NATIVE AREAS
WHERE EACH FAMILY TO PLANT TWO HECTARES OF RICE FOR " LIBERATORS ",
IN ADDITION TO RICE PLANTED FOR FAMILY NEEDS. ENEMY
PROPAGANDIZERS HAVE TOLD PEOPLE THAT IF GVN- PRG NEGOTIATIONS
IN PARIS BREAK DOWN, COMMUNIST WILL LUANCH NEW OFFENSIVE
BEGINNING FIVE DAYS AFTER COMPLETION OF US TROOP WITHDRAWAL.
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4. MAORITY OF MILITARY ACTION IN MR THIS PERIOD OCCURED
IN PHU YEN, RELATED TO FIVE BATTALION SECTOR OPERATION TO
OPEN ROUTE 7 B. SECTOR REPORTS OPERATION PROGRESSING SATIS-
FACTORILY, WITH FIRST DAYS' S ACTION RESULTING IN SIX FRIENDLY
WIA BY VC MINES, AND NINE VC KIA DURING TWO FIREFIGHTS.

5. POPULATION OF LONG HIEP HAMLET, THIEN GIAO FISTRICK, BINH
THUAN, GATHERED ON MAR 15 FOR APPARENTLY SPONTANEOUS DEMONSTRATION
TO PROTEST MAR VC KIDNAPPING OF FIVE CHILDREN FROM HAMLET.
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VC DISPERSED DEMONSTRATORS WITH 15 ROUND ABF. BINH THUAN PC
PIQUED THAT DEMONSTRATION NOT COORDINATED WITH GVN SECURITY
FORCES AND TOLD BINH THUAN POLOFF THAT FAILED DEMONSTRATION
WILL ONLY STRENGTHEN FUTURE VC PROPAGANDA INCURSIONS INTO HAMLET.

6. STILL ANOTHER GVN POLITICAL STRUGGLE ORGANIZATION ESTABLISHED
IN BINH THUAN, ASSING TO ALREADY MIND- BOGGLING COLLECTION OF
SAME. THIS ONE, CALLED " SCHOOLHOUSE FORCE FOR PROTECTION OF
STATE (LUC- LUONG HOC DUONG BAO VE QUOC GIA), COMPRISES APPROX
100 PULIC SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN PROVINCE- ALL ARE
MEMBERS OD DEMOCRACY PARTY- AND IS HOLDING PALNNG MEETING
IN PHAN THIET MAR 17. SHCOOLHOUSE FORCE SAID TO BE JOINTLY
SPONSORED BY MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION AND INTERIOR AND
COMMISSARIAT GENERAL OF PUBLIC PROPANGANDA.

PART VIII MR 3

1. MILITARY ACTIVITY INCREASED SGINIFICANTLY IN BINH DUONG
YESTERDAY. RACH BAP OUTPOSE REMAINED UNDER HEAVY PRESSURE,
WITH THE DEFENDERS REPULSING GROUND ATTACK WHICH LEFT 27
COMMUNIST BODIES HANGING ON THE WIRE; DEFENDERS LOST 3 KILLED
AND 3 WOUNDED. AN ARVN CONVOY WAS ATTACKED ON ROUTE 1 A, LOSING
2 TRUCKS AND 33 WOUNDED.

2. THE CANADIAN LAM SON ICCS DELEGATION SUGGESTED INVESTIGATING THE CONVOY AMBUSH IN PHU GIAO BUT WAS PREVENTED BY OTHER DELEGATIONS' INSISTENCE ON ASKING PERMISSION FROM HIGHER HEADQUARTERS.

3. BINH DUONG CONTINUED ITS WINING AND DINING OF ICCS DELGATES WITH A DINNER FRIDAY EVENING, HOSTED BY LOWER HOUSE DEPUTY PHUC BUT WITH PC CUA PLAINLY IN CHARGE. THE POLES WERE PRESENT FOR THE FIRST TIME, AND JOINED FULLY IN THE CONVIVIAL SPIRIT OF THE OCCASION. CUA HAS ALSO ORGANIZED A TOUR SATURDAY OF LAI THIEU DISTRICT. HE IS CLEARLY GOING ALL OUT TO PLAY THE GRACIOUS HOST, EVEN TO THE EXTENT OF STUDYING GREETINGS IN POLISH AND HUNGARIAN.

4. LOCAL COMMUNIST UNITS IN PHUOC TUY PROVINCE HAVE CONTINUED LOW- LEVEL MILITARY ACTIVITIES IN RECENT WEEKS. THESE INCIDENTS, WHICH AVERAGE LESS THAN TWO A DAY, CONSIST LARGELY OF MINOR HARASSMENT SUCH AS MINING, ROADBLOCKS AND SMALL CONTACTS BETWEEN LOCAL TERRITORIAL FORCES IN PHUOC TUY NOW RARELY CONDUCT LARGE- SCALE
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OPERATIONS

(RENAMED " EXERCISES") AS THEY DID BEFORE THE CEASEFIRE BUT INSTEAD CONFINED THEMSELVES TO PATROLES IN THE VICINITY OF POPULATED AREAS AND LOC' S.

PART IX MR 4

PART IX MR 4

1. SUMMARY: THE LEVEL OF MILITARY ACTIVITY IS UNCHANGED. CANADIAN EXTAFF MINISTER SHARP VISITS CAN THO. VILLAGE COUNCIL ELECTIONS MAY BE HELD IN MAY AND JUNE.

2. MILITARY ACTIVITY CONTINUED AT A RELATIVELY HIGH LEVEL. THERE WERE 63 REPORTED ENEMY INITIATED INCIDENTS, MOSTLY ABF' S IN CHUONG THIEN, DINH TUONG, AND CHAU DOC.

3. CANDIAN EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER SHARP VISITS CAN THO MAR 17 TO MEET TIWHT CANDIAN ICCS PERSONNEL AND RECEIVE A REPORT ON REGION VII ICCS.

4. THE VINH LONG AND BA XUEYN PROVINCE CHIEFA ARE PLANNING VILLAGE COUNCIL ELECTIONS FOR MAY OR JUNE 1973. THE 59 VILLAGES IN VINH LONG AND 38 IN BA XUYEN ARE THOSE WITH COUNCILS THAT HAVE SERVED THE STKUATORY THREE YEARS OR LONGER. ACCORDING TO THE VINH LONG DEPUTY PROVINCE FHIEF, THESE ELECTIONS " HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH THE CEASEFIRE". THEY ARE MERELY AN ADMINISTRATIVE REMEDY TO MAKE UP FOR THE ELECTIONS POSTPONED LAST YEAR BY THE MARTIAL LAW DECREE. WHILE PREPARING 1973 COMMUNTIY DEFENSE AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS, MOST PROVINCES MADE TENTATIVE VILLAGE COUNCIL ELECTION SCHEDULES

AND HAVE ALREADY UPDATED VOTER REGISTRATION LISTS. THE BA XUYEN DEPUTY PROVINCE CHIEF BELIEVES THE HOLDING OF THE VILLAGE ELECTIONS WILL SERVE TO DEFLATE COMMUNIST ALLEGATIONS THAT THE GVN DOES NOT ENJOY POPULAR SUPPORT.

5. MAJOR GEN NGHI, THE MR 4 COMMANDER, IN COMMENTING ON THE VILLAGE ELECTIONS, NOTED THAT THEY WILL ONLY BE HELD IN AREAS THE GVN CONSIDERS WHOLLY SECURE.

6. THE GVN IS PLANNING TO TRANSPORT APPROXIMATELY 3,000 ETHNIC VIETNAMESE RESIDENTS IN CAMBODIA FROM THE NEAK LUONG AREA TO
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TAN CHAU DISTRICT IN CHAU DOC. CHAU DOC AUTHORITIES ARE SETTING UP A TEMPORARY CAMP FOR 1,000 IN TAN CHAU DISTRICT. THE REMAINDER ARE EXPECTED TO MOVE IN WITH RELATIVES AND FRIENDS. CONGEN BELIEVES THE TRANSFER IS RELATED TO THE REPATRIATION OF THE 5,000 RECENT CAMBODIAN REFUGEES REPORTED IN MAR 16 SITREP.

7. FIGHTING IN PHUON DINH HAS DROPPED GREATLY, WITH BOTH SIDES USING TERRITORIAL AND LOCAL FORCES ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY. ROADS ARE GENERALLY SECURE, BUT CANALS LESS SO. THE GOVERNMENT CONTROLS THE POPULATION CONCENTRATIONS IN THE PROVINCE, BUT ITS CONTROL OFTEN DOES NOT EXTEND FAR OUT INTO THE RICEFIELDS, MEANING THAT APPRECIABLE LAND AREAS BELONG TO THE VC. BOTH SIDES HAVE VIOLATED THE CEASEFIRE AGREEMENTS MANY TIMES, BUT NEITHER SIDE SEEMS AT PRESENT TO BE DOING SO SERIOUSLY. POLICE IN THE PROVINCE HAVE BEEN ARRESTING VCI ON CRIMINAL CHARGES SINCE THE CEASEFIRE. THE VC DO NOT SEEM TO HAVE MADE ANY IMPORTANT NEW INITIATIVES, BUT ARE PURSUING THEIR TRADITIONAL ACTIVITIES- TAXATION, PROPAGANDA, ASSASSINATION- AT A FAIRLY LOW LEVEL OF INTENSITY.
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Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 SEP 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <10-Sep-2001 by cunninfx>; APPROVED <17-Oct-2001 by smithrj>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> srp 971211; srp 971211
Subject: SUBJECT CEASEFIRE SITUATION REPORT MARCH 17
TAGS: MILI, PINS, PINT, VS
To: STATE INFO BANGKOK
BUDAPEST
CINCPAC
JAKARTA
MANILA
OTTAWA
PHNOM PENH

VIENTIANE
FRANCE
WARSAW
COMUSMACV
CDRUSSAG NKP RTAFB
DANANG
NHA TRANG
L BIEN HOA
CAN THO

Type: TE

Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005